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María J. Arche*, Antonio Fábregas and Rafael Marín

On event-denoting deadjectival nominalizations

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Abstract: This paper offers a principled account for the nominalizations of dispositional evaluative adjectives. On the descriptive side, the paper shows that (i) in addition to the largely studied deverbal nominalizations, certain deadjectival nominalizations can also refer to events; (ii) the types of adjectives that enable eventive denotation are of a specific sort, namely, those deriving from Dispositional Evaluative Adjectives (e.g., *imprudent*). At the theoretical level, this paper argues that (i) dispositional deadjectival nominalizations introduce an event description not in a head but in a specifier position, as their subject of predication; (ii) in order for a word to have functional structure of the sort associated to verbs, an event description is not enough: functional projections must form a head-sequence with the event-descriptive heads; without this configuration, the merge of a fully-fledged verbal functional structure is blocked, which explains the limitations regarding temporal modification; (iii) The event present in the dispositional deadjectival nominalizations is a partial event description consisting of a head referring to the Process subevent.

Keywords: argument structure; dispositional evaluative adjectives; events; functional structure; nominalizations; predication

1 Introduction

The derived category that has received the highest level of attention in the generative tradition is that of nominalizations, and, among nominalizations, those coming from verbs (*discuss*>*discussion*; *examine*>*examination*) (cf., among others,

*Corresponding author: **María J. Arche**, Center for Research and Enterprise in Language (CREL), School of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Greenwich, Park Row, London SE10 9LS, UK, E-mail: m.j.arche@greenwich.ac.uk

Antonio Fábregas, Department of Language and Culture, HSL-Fakultet, The Arctic University of Norway, University of Tromsø, Tromsø, Norway, E-mail: antonio.fabregas@uit.no

Rafael Marín, CNRS – Université de Lille, STL UMR 8163 – CNRS, Université de Lille, Domaine du Pont-de-bois, Villeneuve d'Ascq Cedex, France, E-mail: rafael.marin@univ-lille.fr

Borer 2012; Chomsky 1970; Grimshaw 1990; Marantz 1997). However, those coming from adjectives (*kind*>*kindness*) have been explored to a lesser extent. This paper contributes to the body of literature that has emerged in the last decade about this understudied area of the grammar (Alexiadou and Martin 2012; Roy 2010; and references therein) by providing a finer-grained taxonomy for deadjectival nominals and a theoretical proposal that accounts for the properties of each.

We propose that, in addition to the two types of deadjectival nominalizations recognized by authors such as Roy (2010), namely, those that denote qualities (*popularity*) and those that denote states (*awareness*), a third class needs to be acknowledged: a type of nominalizations which, despite not coming from verbs, describe events – examples are *imprudence* or *cruelty*. *Imprudence*, for instance, describes an event that someone has (agentively) carried out and can be considered to be *imprudent*. We put forth an analysis that establishes the limits among all the types of deadjectival nominalizations in a principled way, based on the properties of their syntactic structure (the adjective at the root and the functional projections present), along the lines of the approaches by Alexiadou (2001), Borer (2005, 2013), Fábregas and Marín (2012), a.o. Drawing on evidence mainly from Spanish, we will defend the generalization that the only deadjectival nominalizations that can make reference to events are those that derive from dispositional evaluative adjectives (DEAs), going beyond Beuseroy's (2009) observation for French that these nominalizations can refer to instantiations of events. The nominalizations under study here are illustrated for Spanish in (1a) and the adjectives they derive from are listed in (1b).

- (1) a. *crudelidad* 'cruelty', *estupidez* 'stupidity', *grosería* 'rudeness', *imprudencia* 'imprudence', *indiscreción* 'indiscretion', *infidelidad* 'unfaithfulness', *injusticia* 'injustice', *insolencia* 'insolence', *memez* 'nonsense', *necedad* 'stupidity', *ordinariez* 'vulgarity', *tontería* 'silliness', *travesura* 'devilry', *vulgaridad* 'vulgarity'.
- b. *cruel* 'cruel', *estúpido* 'stupid', *grosero* 'rude', *imprudente* 'imprudent', *indiscreto* 'indiscreet', *infiel* 'unfaithful', *injusto* 'unjust', *insolente* 'insolent', *memo* 'silly', *necio* 'stupid', *ordinario* 'vulgar', *tonto* 'silly', *travieso* 'naughty', *vulgar* 'vulgar'.

We take it that the particular properties of DEAs derive from the fact that, in addition to being predicates of sentient individuals, they can also be predicates of the events they perform, as Stowell (1991) originally proposed. As Arche and Stowell (2019) put it, dispositional adjectives attribute characteristic traits to the mind, character or behavior of an individual – which is typically human (2a). Crucially, the subject of a dispositional adjective can also be a clause or DP denoting an Action that an individual performs (2b) and both can co-occur in languages like English; see (2c) and

(2d). The corresponding versions in Spanish in (2a'), (2b'), (2c') and (2d') show a similar pattern. We will steer away from discussing the argument or adjunct status of the infinitival clause and the agent in the form of the PP (*of John* in English, *por parte de Juan* 'by part of John' in Spanish) here – see Landau (2009) for discussion.

- (2) a. *John is imprudent/stupid/wise.*
 a'. *Juan es imprudente/estúpido/sabio.*
 b. *Buying stock shares was imprudent/stupid/wise.*
 b'. *Comprar acciones fue imprudente/estúpido/sabio.*
 c. *John was imprudent/stupid/wise to buy stock shares.*
 c'. *Juan fue imprudente/estúpido/sabio al comprar acciones.*
 d. *Buying stock shares was imprudent/stupid/wise of John.*
 d'. *Comprar acciones fue imprudente/estúpido/sabio por parte de Juan.*

Arche and Stowell (2019) explore the idea that dispositional adjectives primarily attribute the property they describe to actions at all times and the individuals (as in [2a] or [2c]) become characterised by the property by virtue of being the subject performing such an action. We will show that the properties of the derived nominalizations suggest that predication of the individual per se in cases as in (2a) seems possible, as Stowell (1991) and Arche (2006) earlier on sustained. We propose that the event denotation of DEA nominalizations is triggered when the structure of these adjectives contains a subject denoting an event; when the structure contains a DP referring to an individual, the DEA nominalization, we argue, will be a quality denoting nominalization. The basic structure we propose for DEAs in their event descriptive reading is presented in (3a), and (3b) shows the structure embedded under a nominalizer to produce an event-denoting deadjectival nominalization. Further discussion regarding particulars of the event occupying the specifier of the Predicational projection is in Section 4.

- (3) a.

```

graph TD
  A[PredP] --- B[event]
  A --- C[Pred]
  C --- D[Pred]
  C --- E[AP cruel]
  
```

 'cruel'
- b.

```

graph TD
  B[NP] --- F[N -ty]
  B --- G[PredP]
  G --- H[event ø]
  G --- I[Pred]
  I --- J[Pred]
  I --- K[AP cruel-]
  
```

 'cruelty'

Regarding the role of affixes, we show that they vary as for their ability to give rise to different readings and interpretations of the derived category, although in most

cases the kind of nominalization cannot be predicted from it. Finally, we furthermore show that the existence of a structure of origin with the relevant properties does not guarantee the existence of the derived category with the expected characteristics but merely makes it possible, leaving what seem to be gaps in the universe of possible derivations.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the properties of the adjectives at the root of the nominalizations under study. Section 3 describes the properties of DEA-nominalizations making particular reference to two established classifications, Grimshaw's (1990) between complex event and result verbal nominalizations, and Roy's (2010) between states and quality denoting deadjectival nominalizations. Section 4 presents the analysis that accounts for the properties of DEAs and their nominalizations. We will argue that there is an event description – but not a full-fledged Davidsonian event – in the structure of the nominalization. This event description is introduced as the subject of the predication, not within the set of heads that define the evaluative adjective. Section 5 makes some considerations about the aspectual properties of the nominalizations in point, and specifically about the lack of systematicity in their combination with some aspectual modifiers. Section 6 summarizes and concludes the paper.

2 Deadjectival dispositional nominalizations: understanding the adjective at the root

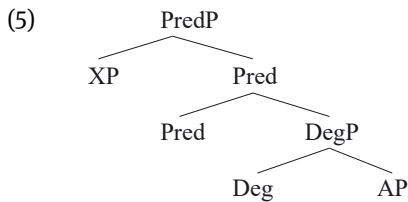
In this and the Section 3 we discuss the properties of the nominalizations under study, arguing that they naturally derive from the properties of the adjectives at the root and the syntactic structure they can enter in.

The existence itself of the nominalizations under study already gives us some information about the sort of adjectives at the root. As Roy (2010) notes, only those known as predicational adjectives yield nominalizations. Predicational adjectives involve certain characteristics that make them pattern differently from non-predicational (also called “relational”) adjectives. Such array of properties include being grammatical in canonical predicate constructions (e.g., as complements in copular clauses or as secondary predicates), taking degree modifiers and being able to appear pre-nominally in languages that allow for such adjectival positioning, like French or Spanish, as observed by Bally (1965), Schmidt (1972), Bache (1978), Bosque (1993), Fábregas (2007) or Marchis (2015). The data set below shows the contrast in all these settings between DEAs, the adjectives at the root of the nominalizations at hand (e.g., *imprudente* ‘imprudent’; *amable* ‘kind’), and non-predicational or relational adjectives (e.g., *presidencial* ‘presidential’): as copular

complements (4a); as secondary predicates (4b); taking degree modification with *muy* ‘very’ (4c); and in prenominal positioning (4d). As (4e) demonstrates, only adjectives giving a positive patterning in the scenarios (4a)–(4d), just as DEAs do, can produce nominalizations: DEA nominalizations are possible while those deriving from non-predicational/relational adjectives are not.

- (4) a. *recibir al embajador fue {imprudente/amable}/ *presidencial.*
 receiving the ambassador was {imprudent/kind}/ presidential.
 b. *Considero {imprudente/amable}/ *presidencial recibir al embajador.*
 consider {imprudent/kind}/ presidential to receive the ambassador.
 c. *un acto muy {imprudente/amable}/ *muy presidencial.*
 an act very {imprudent/kind}/ very presidential.
 d. *el {imprudente/amable} acto vs. el *presidencial acto.*
 the {imprudent/kind} act vs. the presidential act.
 e. *la {imprudencia/amabilidad} del acto vs. *la presidencialidad del acto.*
 the {imprudence/kindness} of the act vs. the presidentiality of the act.

The predicational character of the adjectives just described is, according to Roy (2010), syntactically encoded in the projection of a functional predicational head (Pred), as is the case in other non-verbal predicational relations, as proposed by Bowers (1993), Svenonius (1994), Baker (2002) and Adger and Ramchand (2003). The head Pred selects a property and introduces the external argument (the subject), which is interpreted as the holder of the stative predicate formed. Since the property is a degree property (as described above), it is represented by a Degree Phrase and an Adjective Phrase containing the encyclopedic definition (Kennedy 1999, 2007).



In addition to this, which we assume in this paper, Roy (2010) furthermore argues that Pred introduces the semantic operator “ \wedge ”, making Pred also responsible for intersective semantics. Thus, such an operator makes predicational adjectives intersective, that is, adjectives which, as modifiers of a noun, produce as output a noun of the same type (*John is a tall teacher* entails *John is tall*). Consequently, non-intersective modifiers – for instance, subsective, which do not license the entailment above (*John is a bad teacher* does not entail *John is bad*) – should not allow

predication. We take issue with this second point by Roy and want to refine this correlation here, given that it directly affects DEAs and their nominalizations, as a consequence.

We argue that DEAs have a predicational character at the same time as they exhibit non-intersective properties; specifically, DEAs pattern with subjective event modifying adjectives in the terms of Larson (1988). Our proposal is not that the identification between predicational and intersective adjectives that is hard-wired in Roy's (2010) analysis should be abandoned, however. Event modifying adjectives like our DEAs are actually predicational and can produce nominalizations, but they are not intersective in the sense that they are not predicated from an individual, but from the event that the individual performs (that is, *John was cruel at the party* means that something John did was cruel). We argue that the non-intersective semantics of DEAs does not derive from absence of a Pred head (as Roy 2010 would be forced to propose), but rather from the presence of an event description in the syntactic subject position, in such a way that the properties of the adjective are not predicated from the DP subject of the clause, but from the event that the subject initiates.

Our argumentation goes as follows. Event modifying adjectives are argued to be subjective as they apply to the noun at hand only and produce invalid inferences when the predicate is applied to another one. The set of data below shows that DEAs behave similarly in this respect. To say that Charlie is an imprudent broker (6a) does not mean that he is imprudent “and” he is a broker, but that he is imprudent *as* a broker. Borrowing Arche and Stowell's (2019) wording, we would say that the actions that Charlie carries out in his role or capacity as a broker are imprudent. As a consequence, the final entailment – introduced with the standard logical symbol “∴”, equivalent to “therefore” – is invalid. Contrast this with a purely intersective adjective such as *white* in (7) where the inference is valid.

- (6) a. *Charlie is an imprudent broker.*
 ≠ *Charlie is imprudent and Charlie is a broker.*
 = *Charlie is imprudent as a broker.*
 b. *Charlie is a father.*
 ∴ *Charlie is an imprudent father* [not valid].
- (7) a. *The O2 is a white building.*
 = *The O2 is white and the O2 is a building.*
 b. *The O2 is an indoor arena.*
 ∴ *The O2 is a white indoor arena* [valid].

The idea that DEAs are subjective, being predicated of events, is supported by the fact that when a particular action cannot be identified, some combinations produce odd results. Consider the contrasts below:

- (8) a. *Charlie is an imprudent broker.*
 b. *#Charlie is an imprudent cook.*
 c. *Charlie is a cruel boss.*
 d. *#Charlie is a cruel cook.*

While the sentence (8a) is fine, (8b) is slightly odd. The reason is that we try to identify an action that can be considered imprudent for a cook. Insofar such an action can be found – say, for example, Charlie uses highly allergen ingredients in all his dishes –, the sentence can be deemed as acceptable. The contrast is even clearer between (8c) and (8d). While (8c) sounds unproblematic, (8d) does not. Again, we argue that the reason is that *cruel* can be understood in relation to the actions that a boss prototypically performs. In this sense, it is worth adding that, as Stowell (1991) established, while all DEAs refer to dispositions of individuals, a subset of them denote behaviors that can have what he called “affected goals”,¹ which are syntactically introduced via *to/with* PPs (*John was cruel to Mary*). Since *cruel* is a DEA of the latter type and can introduce affected goals, *a cruel boss* is understood as cruel in the actions that have those individuals under his remit as negatively affected targets.

Because, however, cruel actions oriented towards an affected goal are difficult to construct for a cook, given that the noun (by virtue of its lexical semantics) does not refer to any relation with individuals that can be reconstructed, (8d) is degraded out of context. There is of course a way of rescuing (8d), which crucially again would require conceptual semantic information. We argue that recipients of the dishes cooked by Charlie can be considered goals of some sort; now suppose that Charlie takes pleasure in including ingredients that put those who eat his dishes in utter discomfort. Such a scenario would allow a description of Charlie’s actions as a cook as cruel. Such a cruel behavior would still be in principle logically compatible with a concurrent one whereby Charlie is a loving father, producing an invalid entailment again, as seen below:

¹ Arche (2006) points out that when a goal is added to the grid of DEAs, the adjective is interpreted as referring to an action that involved the goal, as in *Bill was stupid {??to/with} Peter*. Of course there are some adjectives which, by their conceptual semantics, lend themselves more easily than others to be interpreted with an affected goal, but the idea we put forth here is that, once a goal is merged in the syntax, the affected-goal interpretation would be the same as the one easily obtained with those adjectives such as *cruel*.

- (9) a. *Charlie is a cruel cook.*
 ≠ *Charlie is cruel and Charlie is a cook.*
 = *Charlie is cruel as a cook.*
 b. *Charlie is a father.*
 ∴ *Charlie is a cruel father [not valid].*

In sum, along similar lines as suggested by Stowell (1991) and Arche (2006) we take it that DEAs can be predicated of events (*Charlie was cruel to hit the dog*) or individuals (*Charlie is cruel*). In the first case, they are subjective, and in the second case they can be said to be prototypically intersective.² In both cases, we will argue next in Section 3, they can produce nominalizations but of different sorts. A second important division within DEAs is the one between those which, in addition to the participant carrying the event, also introduce affected goals of that event (*cruel*), and those which do not have these participants (*imprudent*). This second distinction is important because it has consequences for the discussion of the participants' grid of the corresponding nominalizations that will be discussed in the following section, together with the other properties of these nominalizations.

3 A finer-grained distinction for deadjectival nominalizations

Here we show that previously established classifications fall short and cannot accommodate all the types of deadjectival nominalizations possible. Those deriving from DEAs do not fit in any recognized group and suggest that a finer-grained classification is needed.

As a point of departure we take Roy's (2010) classification of nominalizations, which elaborates on the classification proposed by Grimshaw (1990) for deverbal nominalizations into complex event and result nominalizations. Grimshaw's original diagnostics for deverbal nominals included involving (i) an event reading; (ii) obligatory arguments; (iii) agent-oriented modifiers; (iv) compatibility with aspectual modifiers; (v) argumenthood of *by*-phrases; and (vi) ability to pluralise. Grimshaw argued that a positive patterning in these corresponded with complex event denotation, while negative patterning (i.e., not involving obligatory arguments, not supporting agent-oriented modification, etc.) demonstrated a result nominalization. Roy (op. cit.) argues that deadjectival nominalizations are to be

² It is also possible to argue that in *John is cruel* there is generic quantification over the acts that John undertakes (a possibility pointed out by Arche 2006) and hence, there is no predication difference anyway. We will not expand on this discussion here.

classified into state nominalizations (S-nominalizations) (e.g., *sadness*) and quality nominalizations (Q-nominalizations) (e.g., *wisdom*),³ which largely (but not completely) corresponded to the one between complex events versus results events from deverbal nominalizations respectively. In our analysis of DEA nominalizations we will use these and other diagnostics. Since the focus of this paper is DEA deadjectival nominalizations, we will be mostly making reference to the contrasts between S-, Q- and none of the above.

As we said, what we want to show here is that the two-way classification (S- vs Q-nominalizations) is insufficient, as DEA nominalizations present properties that do not dovetail with either of those two groups, being able to refer to (dynamic) events, rather than states, while also to qualities. A classification of DEA nominalizations is also needed, since not all of them behave alike. Even though all DEAs can be used to describe events, whether all DEA-nominalizations can refer to events themselves is a more delicate issue. Some DEA-nominalizations only refer to an event that a subject has performed, being unable to refer to the quality the individual has (see those in [10]);⁴ other DEA-nominalizations are unable to denote events, despite the fact that the adjective at the root is able to describe an event (those in [11]) and, finally, other DEA-nominalizations are ambiguous, being able to describe both the quality of the individual and the event the individual has performed (those in [12]).⁵

3 There are more fine-grained classifications that, however, should be viewed as subclasses of Q-nominalizations. Focusing on Spanish, Fábregas (2016) differentiates real quality denoting deadjectival nominalizations, which entail that the argument displays at least the standard degree of the property denoted by the base (i), and dimension denoting deadjectival nominalizations, which lack this entailment and instead denote the whole set of degrees contained in the adjectival scale (ii).

- (i) *La alt-ura de Juan me sorprendió.*
the tall-ness of Juan me surprised.
'Juan's tallness surprised me'
- (ii) *La alt-ura del niño es insuficiente.*
the height of.the child is insufficient.
'The child's height is insufficient'

Just as in deverbal nominalizations, it is possible to recategorise some Q-nominalizations as denoting participants that display the quality, as in Spanish *rojeces* 'red spots', from *rojez* 'redness'.

4 Further analysis of these nouns is left for future investigation. It may be possible that *travesura* is not derived from the adjective but from the root directly, with the affix providing some crucial conceptual semantics or some degree of lexicalization involved.

5 As mentioned above, it is this distinct behavior shown in the nominalizations that incline us to think that DEAs should be defined as predicates that can apply to the individuals alone, and not only to the events they perform.

- (10) Eventive only (*travesura* type)
bobada ‘nonsense’, *bravuconada* ‘piece of bravado’, *cabazonada* ‘stubbornness’, *cursilada* ‘tawdriness’, *fanfarronada* ‘boast’, *memez* ‘nonsense’, *sandez* ‘nonsense’ *tontada* ‘silliness’, *travesura*⁶ ‘devilry’.
- (11) Quality only (*modestia* type)
amabilidad ‘kindness’, *arrogancia* ‘arrogance’, *astucia* ‘cunningness’, *audacia* ‘audacity’, *cautela* ‘caution’, *cobardía* ‘cowardice’, *cortesía* ‘courtesy’, *egoísmo* ‘selfishness’, *fidelidad* ‘faithfulness’, *generosidad* ‘generosity’, *honradez* ‘decency’ *humildad* ‘humbleness’, *modestia* ‘modesty’, *prudencia* ‘prudence’, *soberbia* ‘arrogance’, *valentía* ‘braveness’.
- (12) Ambiguous (*imprudencia* type)
crueledad ‘cruelty’, *estupidez* ‘stupidity’, *grosería* ‘rudeness’, *imprudencia* ‘imprudence’, *indiscreción* ‘indiscretion’, *injusticia* ‘injustice’, *infidelidad* ‘unfaithfulness’, *insolencia* ‘insolence’, *necedad* ‘stupidity’, *ordinariez* ‘vulgarity’, *osadía* ‘daring’, *temeridad* ‘temerity’, *tontería* ‘silliness’, *vulgaridad* ‘vulgarity’.

We here show a generalization and a puzzle: while all deadjectival nominals with eventive properties come from DEAs, not all DEAs yield eventive deadjectival nominalizations. That is, even though all adjectives at the root of the nominalizations in (10), (11) and (12) pattern alike in exhibiting the properties noticed by Stowell (1991), participating in alternations of the sort *John is cruel/John is cruel to hit the dog/It is cruel of John to hit the dog*, not all of them produce nominalizations with the exactly same properties, which is puzzling. Along the lines of Alexiadou (2001 and subsequent work) and Borer (2005, 2013) and other syntacticians, we take it that the properties of nominalizations are accounted for by the properties of the adjective at the root; if this is so, the gaps in the derivation (e.g., nouns in (11) not being able to denote events) need further explanation. In this sense we are going to limit ourselves to note a speculation here. What those unable to produce eventive nominalization seem to share to a large extent is that they refer to properties deemed as positive pragmatically. As for how exactly this can play a role, we speculate here that it may be related to the fact that it is negative properties in general those that lend themselves to nominalize more easily. As Fernández Lagunilla (1983) and Bosque (1989) pointed out, adjectives denoting properties

⁶ Since this suffix can also attach to nouns and give the same meaning: e.g. *diablura* (from *diablo* [noun]), we leave it open at the moment whether the noun derives from an adjective.

that deviate from what can be considered as ‘the norm’ lead to nominalizations more productively. For example, since, by world knowledge, it can be considered to be the default case for a person to have two arms and two legs, only those individuals lacking one of them are lexically described in a specific way (e.g., a lame person vs a two-legged person). In a similar vein, we can think that positive actions are the case taken by default and those referring to negative ones are singled out in the language. In favour of this idea we can add that nominalizations such as *generosidades* ‘generosities’ or *amabilidades* ‘kindnessness’, which come from adjectives in principle denoting positive properties, seem to involve a sarcastic connotation when intended to use eventively. The examples that come to natives’ minds more prominently are those of the sort *¡Ya conozco yo las generosidades/amabilidades de Juan!* ‘I do already know the generosities/kindnessness of John!’, which lead to the opposite interpretation (e.g., the acts of John that look generous end up not being so or provoking some sort of disruption at the receiving end). However, we also note that, even though this idea would account for the existence of the eventive nominalizations in (10) and (12) – the vast majority remitting to negative attitudes –, it does not readily account for the viability of those in (11). That is, referring to a positive disposition does not rule out the possibility to nominalize altogether, but only the possibility to refer to events: still, nominalizations referring to a quality are possible even if the adjective denotes a (pragmatically) positive disposition. And even from that perspective, nouns such as *egoísmo* ‘selfishness’, in principle referring to a negative attitude, would require some additional explanation, since it cannot refer to an event. Why the case by default would be the positive one in the case of event referral (which would explain the existence of nominalizations referring to negative events only following Bosque 1989 and Fernández Lagunilla 1983) but not in the case of qualities in general is something we cannot resolve here. We limit ourselves now to record these facts and the aforementioned speculation for the gap on the paradigm.

As pointed out earlier on, the set of nominalizations in (11) behave as quality nominalizations and those in (12) are ambiguous and can behave as quality nouns in addition to eventive. As proof of their patterning as quality nouns, we take the tests proposed by Flaux and Van de Velde (2000), namely, the viability of the noun with the so-called genitive of quality (13a) and as a complement of *mostrar* ‘show’ or *dar muestras de* ‘give signs of’, (13b). As can be seen, only the nominalizations in (11) and (12) can have a quality reading; those in (10) are excluded.

- (13) a. *Juan es de una gran *bobada/ amabilidad/ imprudencia.*
 Juan is of a great nonsense/ kindness/ imprudence.
 b. *Juan dio muestras de *bobada/ amabilidad/ imprudencia.*
 Juan gave signs of nonsense/ kindness/ imprudence.

We will next show that DEA-nominalizations in (10) and (12) exhibit properties that draw them apart from S(tate)- or Q(uality)-nominalizations, patterning like some other typical eventive nominalizations in several tests. We will also show that DEA-nominalizations are not exactly the same as complex event nominalizations (e.g., *examination*) or simple event nouns (e.g., *party*) since they can be shown to behave differently in other scenarios.

3.1 Tests on nominal eventivity I: complement of action denoting verbs, take place and perception verbs

The following classical tests on nominal eventivity (Godard and Jayez 1996; Grimshaw 1990) show that the nominalizations under study behave like event nominals in the majority of relevant respects. In this sense, they seem to pattern with complex event nouns and simple event nouns, differing from both S-nominals and Q-nominals in their behaviour.

This patterning can be seen, for example, in lexical selection phenomena. DEA-nominalizations can appear as complements of action-denoting verbs such as *llevar a cabo* ‘carry out’ or *cometer* ‘commit’ (14).

- | | | | |
|------|----|--|------------------------------|
| (14) | a. | <i>Juan llevó a cabo dos operaciones.</i> | Complex event N ⁷ |
| | | Juan conducted two operations. | |
| | b. | <i>Juan llevó a cabo dos proyectos.</i> | Simple event N |
| | | Juan conducted two projects. | |
| | c. | <i>Juan {llevó a cabo/cometió} {dos imprudencias/varias crueldades}.⁸</i> | |
| | | Juan conducted/carried out two imprudencies/several cruelties. | |
| | | | DEA-nom |
| | d. | <i>*Juan cometió dos tristezas/varias perplejidades.</i> | S-nom |
| | | Juan carried out two sadnesses/several perplexities. | |

⁷ An anonymous reviewer asks for further clarification regarding the classification of these nominalizations as complex event denoting as opposed to result nominalizations (in Grimshaw’s 1990 taxonomy). We want to point out that, even though it is true that the nominalizations themselves could obtain the result interpretation when they are in combination with verbs such as *llevar a cabo* ‘carry out’, as in the test, this reading derives from the predicate that selects them, which expresses the culmination of an event. Within the predicate, they denote events that are used to measure and evaluate the culmination denoted by the verb. Similar reasoning applies for the tests in (14) and (15).

⁸ Lexically, *cometer* ‘commit’ imposes additional selectional restrictions related to conceptual semantics: only nominals expressing negative events, as crimes or offenses, are compatible with *cometer* ‘commit’.

- e. **Juan cometió dos bellezas/varias sabidurías.* Q-nom
 Juan carried out two beauties/several wisdoms.

DEA-nominalizations also pattern with simple and complex event nouns as complement of *tener lugar* ‘take place’ (15).

- (15) a. *Esta mañana han tenido lugar varias discusiones/operaciones.*
 This morning have taken place several discussions/operations.
 Complex event N
- b. *Esta mañana han tenido lugar varios accidentes/conciertos.*
 this morning have taken place several accidents/concerts.
 Simple event N
- c. *Esta mañana han tenido lugar varias imprudencias/injusticias.*
 This morning have taken place several imprudencies/injusticies.
 DEA-nom
- d. **Esta mañana han tenido lugar varias tristezas/perplejidades.*
 This morning have taken place several sadnessess/perplexities.
 S-nom
- e. **Esta mañana han tenido lugar varias bellezas/sabidurías.* Q-nom
 This morning have taken place several beauties/wisdoms.

Finally, DEA-nominalizations can be the complements of perception verbs such as *presenciar* ‘to witness’ (16).

- (16) a. *He presenciado las discusiones/operaciones del jefe.*
 I.have witnessed the discussions/operations by the boss.
 Complex event N
- b. *He presenciado varios terremotos/varias tormentas.*
 I.have witnessed several earthquakes/several storms.
 Simple event N
- c. *He presenciado las imprudencias/injusticias del presidente.*
 I.have witnessed the imprudencies/injusticies of the president.
 DEA-nom
- d. ??*He presenciado las tristezas/perplejidades del presidente.*
 I.have witnessed the sadnessess/perplexities of the president.
 S-nom
- e. **He presenciado las bellezas/sabidurías del presidente.* Q-nom
 I.have witnessed the beauties/wisdoms of the president.

3.2 Tests on nominal eventivity II: ability to pluralize and be counted

Just as simple event denoting nouns (*fiesta* ‘party’, *boda* ‘wedding’) (17) or complex event nominalizations (*operación* ‘operation’, *discusión* ‘discussion’) (18), the DEA-nominalizations in (10) and (12) are able to pluralize (19), in clear contrast with deadjectival nouns denoting states (20) or qualities (21):

- | | | |
|------|---|------------------|
| (17) | <i>dos fiestas/ cuatro bodas</i>
two parties/ four weddings | simple event Ns |
| (18) | <i>dos discusiones/ varias operaciones</i>
two discussions/ several operations | complex event Ns |
| (19) | <i>dos imprudencias/ varias injusticias</i>
two imprudencies/ several injustices | DEA-nom |
| (20) | * <i>dos pesadeces/ tres tristezas</i>
two heavinesses/ three sadnesses | S-nom |
| (21) | * <i>dos bellezas/ dos sabidurías</i>
two beauties/ two wisdoms | Q-nom |

In the literature, the ability to pluralise has been extensively discussed after Grimshaw (1990), who initially claimed that it was a sign of lack of eventivity and pattern as result. Many authors have parted ways from the original idea of taking pluralization as a negative diagnose for complex event nominals and have shown that plurality can co-occur with typical deverbal projections such as aspect (Alexiadou 2001; Alexiadou et al. 2010). This can be clearly seen in an example such as *Las sucesivas discusiones de Juan sobre el teorema* ‘Juan’s successive discussions of the theorem’, with a deverbal nominalization with a fully-fledged thematic grid displayed in plural.

Pluralization has also been discussed in relation to aspectual properties. In particular, it has been linked to telicity and perfectivity (e.g., Alexiadou et al. 2010; Barque et al. 2012; Fábregas and Marín 2012). Plural DEA-nominalizations seem to effectively refer to bounded instantiations of acts that can be described by the adjectival property. Just as canonical Q-nominalizations (22a), DEA-nominalizations that only have a Q-reading (11) reject pluralization (22b), but those that denote events (10) allow for it, as complex and simple event nouns, as witnessed by (23).

- (22) a. #*dos blancuras*
two whiteness
b. #*dos amabilidades*
two niceties
- (23) a. *dos bobadas*
two stupidities
b. *dos locuras*
two mad-acts

Interestingly, the ability of DEAs to pluralize seems to correlate with other properties of their argument structure. Consider the DEA-nominalizations in (12) above, which allow both an event reading and a quality reading. An example is (24) below: the DEA-nominalization in singular seems to be ambiguous. On the one hand, it can be considered to refer to a quality, as proved by the viability of the genitive of quality (Flaux and Van de Velde 2000) shown in (25). Note that in this reading DEA-nominalizations (25a) pattern with Q-nominalizations (25b), and differ from S-nominalizations (25c).

- (24) *la crueldad de Juan*
the cruelty of Juan
'Juan's cruelty/Juan's cruel act'
- (25) a. *Juan es de una gran crueldad.*
Juan is of a great cruelty.
b. *Juan es de una gran belleza.*
Juan is of a great beauty.
'Juan is someone of great beauty'
b. **Juan es de una gran tristeza.*
Juan is of a great sadness.
Intended: 'Juan is someone characterised by great sadness'

On the other, when an additional argument is added, the nominalization cannot refer to the quality anymore. Note the contrast in (26): while the eventive interpretation favoured by the introducing verb *llevar a cabo* 'carry out' permits the presence of the affected goal argument, when the quality construal is enforced, the syntactic presence of the affected goal is disallowed (26b).

- (26) a. *Juan llevó a cabo una gran crueldad con Pedro.*
Juan carried out a great cruelty with Pedro.
b. **Juan fue de una gran crueldad con Pedro.*
Juan was of a great cruelty with Pedro.

Correspondingly, pluralization is only allowed in the cases where an event reading is secured (27a), and disallowed when a quality reading prompted (27b).

- (27) a. *Juan llevó a cabo grandes crueldades con Pedro.*
 Juan carried out great cruelties with Pedro.
 b. **Juan dio muestras de grandes crueldades con Pedro.*
 Juan gave signs of great cruelties with Pedro.

3.3 Temporoaspectual modification

Another landmark of nouns denoting events, versus those that denote objects or individuals, is that they can combine with prepositional modifiers that denote periods of time and other aspectual modifiers. For instance, in (28) the modifier introduced by *de* ‘of’ measures the duration of the instantiation of the event denoted by the complex event noun.

- (28) *una operación de dos horas*
 an operation of two hours

Simple event nouns also allow this type of modification (29), in contrast to object denoting nouns (30).

- (29) *una fiesta de dos horas*
 a party of two hours
 (30) *una mesa (*de dos horas)*
 a table (of two hours)

These facts are not surprising if one adopts a standard Neo-Davidsonian event semantics: the modifier introduced with *de* ‘of’ is measuring the temporal duration of an event, that is, it is operating over the time parameter introduced by an event argument <e>. Both complex and simple event nouns would contain this event argument, while object-denoting nouns would lack it. In this regard, note that DEA-nominalizations allow for this type of temporal measures but only marginally and depending on the DEA at the root. We will return to this gradience in acceptability and what it can mean in Section 5. What we want to record here is that there seems to be a contrast between some DEA nominalizations (31) and S- and Q-nominalizations, which clearly disallow for durative modifiers in all cases altogether (32).

- (31) a. *una infidelidad de dos meses*
 an infidelity of two months
 ‘an infidelity that lasted two months’
 b. *??una necedad de dos días*
 a stupidity of two days
- (32) a. *una tristeza (*de dos meses)* S-nominalizations
 a sadness (of two months)
 b. *una belleza (*de muchos años)* Q-nominalizations
 a beauty (of many years)

Example (32a) is particularly striking as the base adjective, *triste* ‘sad’, is canonically considered a stage-level predicate (Carlson 1977; Milsark 1974) in Spanish, given its compatibility with the copula *estar* ‘be’, which almost perfectly identifies any stage-level predicate (33) (Arche 2006; Fernández Leborans 1999, a.o.).

- (33) *Juan está triste.*
 Juan is sad.

Stage-level predicates are typically characterized in opposition to individual-level predicates as carrying a spatiotemporal variable (Kratzer 1995). Regardless whether this characterization correctly captures all facts, the S-nominalization formed above does not accept a measurement of the event’s temporal extension, while DEA-nominalizations, however, do to some extent, as the better formation of the cases in (31) shows. This suggests that the inclusion of a spatiotemporal variable does not suffice to account for temporal extension modification.

A similar pattern emerges when we consider aspectual adjectives that are bona fide candidates to quantify over the occurrences of an event, such as *frecuente* ‘frequent’. Both complex and simple events allow for it, as can be seen in (34a) and (34b) respectively.

- (34) a. *sus frecuentes operaciones*
 her frequent operations
 b. *los frecuentes terremotos*
 the frequent earthquakes

Object-denoting nouns reject this modifier, as expected if it is quantifying over events and these nouns lack an event variable.

- (35) **las frecuentes sillas*
 the frequent chairs

Again, DEA-nominalizations – although with some admitted gradience in acceptability (see the contrast in [36a] and [36b]) –, allow for these modifiers better than S- and Q-nominalizations, which sharply reject them (see [36c] and [36d]).

- (36) a. *sus frecuentes imprudencias*
 his frequent imprudences
 b. *??sus frecuentes vulgaridades*
 his frequent vulgarities
 c. **sus frecuentes alturas*
 his frequent tallnesses
 d. **sus frecuentes bellezas*
 his frequent beauties

One could argue that the reason for the ungrammaticality of (36c) and (36d) is that these nominalizations are independently unable to appear in the plural, or at least difficult to conceptualize in the plural. There is, however, a class of frequency adjectives that are compatible with singular nouns: those talking about regular repetitions at regular intervals, such as *diario* ‘daily’, *semanal* ‘weekly’ or *mensual* ‘monthly’, illustrated in (37).

- (37) a. *una revisión semanal*
 a check-up weekly
 ‘a weekly check-up’
 b. *un concierto semanal*
 a concert weekly
 ‘a weekly concert’

Even though here the noun can appear in the singular, S- and Q-nominalizations reject these modifiers (see [38c], [38d]), and DEA-nominalizations are, again, variable with respect to their acceptability (see [38a] vs. [38b]), suggesting again that event-quantification with them does not happen in an obvious across the board manner.

- (38) a. *una travesura/ crueldad/ imprudencia semanal*
 a prank/ cruelty/ imprudence weekly
 b. *??una vulgaridad semanal*
 a vulgarity weekly
 c. **una tristeza semanal*
 a sadness weekly
 d. **una belleza semanal*
 a beauty weekly

3.4 Manner readings of modifiers

Similarly, in standard Neo-Davidsonian semantics manner modifiers are viewed as predicates from events, which leads to the natural conclusion that only constituents that contain an event variable support manner modification. Again, as expected from the standard analysis of deverbal event nominalizations and simple event nouns, adjectives denoting manners in which an agent performs an action can combine with these nouns; see (39):

- (39) a. *la rápida construcción del puente* Complex event N
 the fast building of the bridge
 b. *la rápida conferencia de Chomsky* Simple event N
 the fast talk by Chomsky

Object-denoting nouns do not allow a manner interpretation of these adjectives – with the exception of some idioms like *fast food*, which are not systematic. Some object nouns denoting artificial objects whose function is to perform an event do allow these modifiers (see [40]), but when they lack this component of meaning the modification is impossible, as (41) shows.

- (40) *una impresora rápida*
 a printer fast

- (41) #*la rápida ventana*
 the fast window

DEA-nominalizations allow such modifiers in the relevant interpretation – in (42) it is understood that the event happened in a determined manner –, while S- and Q-nominalizations reject them (43).

- (42) a. *la descarada infidelidad de Juan*
 the cheeky infidelity of Juan
 b. *la insensata temeridad de Juan*
 the foolish boldness of Juan
 c. *la audaz travesura de Juan*
 the audacious prank of Juan

- (43) a. **la {rápida / insensata / audaz} tristeza de Juan*
 the {fast / foolish / audacious} sadness of Juan
 b. **la {rápida / insensata / audaz} belleza de Juan*
 the fast / foolish / audacious beauty of Juan

3.5 The selection of PPs licensed by each nominalization

The analysis of the prepositional phrases (PPs) that can appear in nominalizations reveals critical properties of them. In particular, as Anderson (1983) and Grimshaw (1990) argue, PPs reveal the theta-assigning properties of the noun. Also, they establish the difference between denoting a syntactically projected argument and a conceptual participant. Related to this, the types of prepositions that can appear in non-eventive nouns and in nouns not derived from verbs can be restricted. This aspect will again show that DEA nominalizations do not completely pattern with typical complex event nominalizations or simple event nouns.

Just like complex and simple event nouns ([44a] and [44b] respectively), DEA-nominalizations are compatible with PP complements that can be interpreted as participants of the event denoted by the nominalization.⁹ Note here that DEAs that can introduce an affected goal (*to/with Mary in cruel to Mary*) can do so in the corresponding nominalizations as well (see 45).

- (44) a. *Después de su destrucción por los bucaneros* Complex event N
 after of its destruction by the buccaneros
 ‘After its [=Panama] destruction by the buccaneros’
 [Ricardo Palma, Tradiciones Peruanas, 1876]
- b. *la guerra de los estudiantes con us profesores* Simple event N
 the war of the students with their teachers
- (45) a. *la infidelidad de Pedro con María* DEA-nominalizations
 the infidelity of Pedro with María
- b. *la injusticia del gobierno con los nativos*
 the injustice of the government with the natives
- c. *la amabilidad de Pedro con su madre*
 the kindness of Pedro with his mother

In event-denoting DEA-nominalizations, *of*-PPs exhibit a uniform thematic behavior, being consistently interpreted as agents. This draws them apart from simple event nouns, where the *of*-PP can be variably understood. To illustrate, in example (46a), which involves a DEA-nominalization, *de Pedro* ‘of Pedro’ can only refer to the action

⁹ An anonymous reviewer points out that for some native speakers, the complement headed by *por* ‘by’ is not fully acceptable with nominalizations. Note that the point we want to make is that the complements headed by *por* ‘by’ seem excluded from combining with DEA nominalizations in contrast to complex event nouns which seem to admit them better—even though there may be some variation in acceptability. The relevant examples included now are taken from Mark Davies’ (2002) *Corpus del español*, to record factual combination.

that Pedro brought about, and crucially not one in which he was the affected target. In contrast, the *of*-PP in (46b) can refer to the organizer of the party or the honored recipient of the party, showing an unfixed thematic interpretation of the DP in the PP. Note also that the agentive interpretation of the PP is further supported by agentive modifiers such as *deliberada* ‘deliberate’ as seen in *la deliberada crueldad de Pedro* ‘the deliberate cruelty of Peter’. Finally, when such PP is omitted altogether (*la crueldad* ‘the cruelty’), the eventive denotation disappears and a quality reading is the only possible, probably with a null argument with arbitrary interpretation as subject – as suggested by Roy (2010) for Q-nominalizations.

- (46) a. *la crueldad de Pedro*
 the cruelty of Pedro
 b. *la fiesta de Pedro*
 the party of Pedro

With respect to the selection of prepositions, Fábregas (2014) notes that Spanish complex and simple event nouns formally differ in the prepositions they allow for to introduce the DPs corresponding to event participants. Like object-denoting nouns (47), simple event nouns allow the prepositions *de* ‘of’ and *con* ‘with’, but reject prepositions like *a* ‘to’, *por* ‘by’ or *en* ‘in’ (48).

- (47) a. *un libro {de/ *por} Chomsky*
 a book {of/ by} Chomsky
 b. *la mesa {de/ *en} la esquina*
 the table {of/ in} the corner
 c. *una silla con tres patas*
 a chair with three legs

- (48) a. *una conferencia {de/ *por} Chomsky*
 a talk {of/ by} Chomsky
 b. *el terremoto {de/ *en} Lisboa*
 the earthquake {of/ in} Lisbon
 c. *una fiesta con mis amigos*
 a party with my friends

These prepositions are allowed to introduce arguments in the case of complex event nouns, as shown in the corpus examples of (49).

- (49) a. *su entrega a la causa de Dios*
 his surrender to the cause of god
 ‘his surrendering to God’s cause’

[Luis Hernáez, *Donde ladrón no llega*]

- b. *su muerte en junio de 1953*
 his death in June of 1953
 [Víctor M. Llona, *Obras narrativas y ensayos*]
- c. *su ejecución por los maestros en lengua inglesa*
 its execution by the masters in language English
 ‘its [=short story] execution by the virtuosos of the English language’
 [Sara Karlik, *Entre ánimas y sueños*]

The standard analysis (Grimshaw 1990; Marantz 1997) is that the PP complements with simple event nouns have the same syntactic status as PP modifiers with object nouns. However, as simple event nouns denote actions, these modifiers can be interpreted – conceptually – as participants in those actions. In contrast, the PP complements with complex event nouns are introduced in syntactic argument positions – presumably licensed by the verbal base. By hypothesis, prepositions like *por* ‘by’ or *a* ‘to’ must appear in argument positions to be licensed. Note, now, that DEA-nominalizations reject the prepositions that must be licensed in argument positions in Spanish, clearly suggesting that they are not real arguments, but, rather, PP modifiers that can be semantically interpreted as participants in the event denoted by the noun. See (50) as an illustration.

- (50) **la infidelidad a María por Juan en su casa*
 the infidelity to María by Juan in her house

To summarise this section, we have shown (i) that there is a grammatically testable class of deadjectival nominalizations that we have classified as eventive, and (ii) that this class does not behave as complex event nouns even if they have partial semantic properties of event-denoting nouns.¹⁰ DEA-nominalizations also contrast with simple event nouns in that event-quantification and event-measurement are generally possible with the latter, while there is a finer-grained gradience with DEA-nominalizations which shows that event quantification is not possible in the

10 As the attentive reader must have noticed in the comparison presented in this section, the properties of simple event nouns like *fiesta* ‘party’ are syntactically identical to object-denoting nouns like *mesa* ‘table’, and only differ from it in terms of lexical selection (e.g., allowing a temporal reading of a modifier) or allowing argument-like interpretations of their genitive modifiers (but, crucially, not the same prepositional marking as the arguments of complex event nouns). Even though we will not develop this here (see Fábregas 2016), we assume with Borer (2013) that simple event nouns have the syntactic structure of object-denoting nouns, lacking any internal verbal or event-descriptive head. Their differences with object-denoting nouns follow from the conceptual semantics associated to the root, which describes a situation that therefore allows combination with roots whose semantic information lexically expresses time or manner.

general case. In the next section, we will discuss how DEA nominalizations (and their corresponding adjectival bases) come to have an event interpretation.

4 Analysis: event subjects within the base structure

This section analyses the event reading of DEA-nominalizations. We first show that the properties of event-denoting DEA-nominalizations are already present in their bases. Then we will discuss how the event variable appears in the structure: we will show that it cannot be carried by the evaluative adjective itself, or even be a head within its extended projection. Finally, we present our analysis, where the event variable is the result of the presence of an event lacking some event descriptions taking Ramchand (2018) as framework; we show how this solution accounts for the properties of DEA eventive nominalizations.

4.1 It is all in the stem

As the subset of deadjectival nominalizations that denote an event come from DEAs, the analysis has to start with a proposal of what the syntactic structure of DEAs is. We will argue that DEAs can be predicated not only of a sentient individual but of an event as well. Following Stowell (1991), Arche (2006, 2010), Arche and Marín (2011), Fábregas et al. (2013), and Arche and Stowell (2019), we argue that the structure of DEAs includes a covert process description that lacks time and world parameters, following Ramchand's (2018) division between event descriptions and temporal indexes.

As repeatedly noted in the literature, DEAs display eventive properties (partial, we shall argue) and in particular those related to dynamic processes. First, they allow place, time and manner modification (51a)–(51c). Second, they allow the copulative verb to combine with the progressive periphrasis (51d), and in languages that differentiate between imperfective and perfective, they allow perfective (51e), a grammatical aspect that presupposes the existence of an eventuality that is terminated. Third, like the corresponding nominalizations, they allow for an agentive interpretation of the subject and allow a second complement that represents the affected entity (51f).

- (51) a. *Juan fue cruel en la fiesta.*
 Juan was PFV cruel in the party
- b. *Juan fue cruel ayer.*
 Juan was PFV cruel yesterday

- c. *Juan fue insensatamente cruel.*
 Juan was PFV foolishly cruel
- d. *Juan está siendo cruel.*
 Juan is being cruel.
- e. *Juan {fue/ *era} cruel en la fiesta.*
 Juan was PFV/ was IMPF cruel in the party.
- f. *Juan fue cruel con María.*
 Juan was PFV cruel with María.

None of these properties are displayed by other classes of adjectives, as illustrated in (52):

- (52) a. **Juan es alto en la fiesta.*
 Juan is tall in the party.
- b. **Juan fue alto ayer.*
 Juan was PFV tall yesterday.
- c. *#Juan es insensatamente alto.*
 Juan is foolishly tall (Ok in a degree reading).
- d. **Juan está siendo alto.*
 Juan is being tall.
- e. *Juan {*fue/era} alto.*
 Juan {was.PFV/was IMPF} tall.
- f. **Juan era alto con María.*
 Juan was IMPF tall with María.

It is not surprising that at least some of the deadjectival nouns coming from DEAs display this type of properties, as the bases over which they are built already do. Now, the question is why these adjectives have eventive properties, and however cannot be inflected like verbs. The answer, given the parallelism between the adjectival base and the nominalization, must be in the internal properties of the adjective. However, the answer cannot simply be that the adjectival structure contains a Davidsonian event structure; the next section will show why.

4.2 DEAs do not contain an event variable

A direct way to capture the eventive properties observed in DEA nominalizations would be placing a Davidsonian event variable in the structure. However, we do not think that is the right analysis for the following reasons. An analysis involving a Davidsonian variable could adopt different forms. For instance, one could add an argument <e> tagged with world and time parameters to the lexical entry of such

adjectives (53a), or one could claim that the adjective can be embedded under verbal functional structure, stating that this functional structure adds to it an event variable introduced by a head that dominates the AP (53b).

- (53) a. [cruel]<e>
 b. [XP X <e> (...) [AP]]

More fine-grained distinctions are obviously conceivable depending on how many layers one wants to allow for within the lexical structure of the AP, and how one labels the verbal functional projections. However, these proposals have two properties in common: there is a constituent <e> that introduces an event variable with world and time properties, and that event variable is introduced as a head with which the AP forms a single syntactic constituent.

This approach – any approach where the AP and the Davidsonian event variable are one single constituent within an uninterrupted sequence of heads – makes wrong empirical predictions when the DEAs are used in an event interpretation.

First, the approach makes wrong predictions about the combination between DEAs and aspectual or temporal heads. Under standard assumptions (e.g., Parsons 1990; Partee 1973; Stowell 2007), temporal and aspectual information is treated as a predicate of an event, specifically as a predicate of the time parameter of an event. Claiming that DEAs contain event variables incorrectly predicts that they will be combinable with temporal and aspectual heads, with the result that they would be at least partially inflected as verbs. To the best of our knowledge, this situation is unattested across languages, and definitely excluded in Spanish.

- (54) **cruel-a-ba*
 cruel-ThV-past. IMPF
 Intended: ‘he acted cruelly’

In an approach like (53b) above, this comes as a surprise because the DEA is dominated by verbal structure which introduces the event variable: in principle, as far as syntax is concerned, it should be possible to add the heads for aspect and tense that are required to inflect the base as a verb – in fact, the label of the whole structure would be verbal. The approach in (53a) would have to address the problem of why that event variable is not compatible with verbal inflection, even if the semantics is compatible. Granted, that approach could claim that the label of the DEA is adjectival, and impose a principle that says that only verbs can combine with temporal and aspectual inflection, so another category – even if it contains an event variable – will not inflect in that way. However, this would be an obvious stipulation that would not derive from any other fact, and one that would be

surprising in a system where one allows event variables to be present in non-verbal categories.

Second, an approach where the event variable is introduced as a head also makes the wrong empirical predictions about the interpretation of prefixes and the availability of temporal prefixal readings. Spanish has one prefix, *re-*, which can be used in two meanings with verbal bases. The first meaning is iterative – roughly ‘again’ –, as in (55a). The second meaning is degree – excessive degree –, as in (55b).

- (55) a. *re-leer*
 re-read
 ‘to read again’
 b. *re-peinar*
 re-comb
 ‘to comb one’s hair too much’

One could assume that there is only one prefix *re-* that is an operator that quantifies over intervals. The aspectual reading follows if the prefix quantifies over temporal intervals, introducing a repetition of the event, and the degree reading follows when the prefix quantifies over an interval of values within a gradable scale (Kennedy 1999). Non-stative verbs allow the temporal reading because they contain event variables tagged with time parameters. In contrast, regular adjectives only allow the degree reading, because they lack event variables.

- (56) *re-guapo*
 re-handsome
 ‘very handsome, too handsome’

If DEAs formed a constituent with the event variable, one would expect that the iterative reading of this prefix would emerge with them. This is not the case, however. As shown in (57), the prefix can only be interpreted in a degree reading.

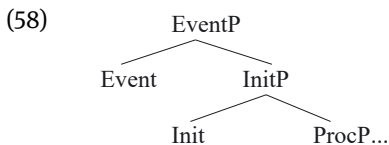
- (57) *Juan fue re-amable con María en la fiesta.*
 Juan was re-kind with María in the party.
 ‘Juan was extremely kind with María at the party’
 #‘Juan was kind with María twice or more at the party’

Option (53a) would have no way to explain why the iterative meaning is excluded with objects that at the lexical level contain an event variable, given that iteration is quantification over the temporal tag of events – again, the theory would have to stipulate that only verbs can be iterative. Option (53b) might be able to argue that the prefix forcefully attaches below the verbal structure, directly to the AP level,

but there is ample evidence that prefixes in general (DiSciullo 2005) and *re*-in particular (Sportiche 2012) can attach to bigger functional constituents.

The solution to the puzzle, we argue, involves two steps. The first one is to sever the time and world parameters from the eventuality description. This can be implemented in a system such as the one proposed by Ramchand (2008, 2018), where there are three heads that describe the eventuality providing it with content and introducing the argument structure: those corresponding to a causation/initiation subevent (Init), a process subevent (Proc) and a result subevent (Res). Ramchand (2018) treats the heads responsible for introducing arguments and defining the verbal subevents (Init, Proc and Res) as partial eventuality descriptions that describe different situations and relations between participants in these situations. Let us refer to these partial event descriptions as E, to differentiate them from the standard Davidsonian event argument $\langle e \rangle$. The difference between E and standard $\langle e \rangle$ events is that the E eventuality descriptions lack time and world indexes. Without these indexes, these event descriptions cannot be linked to aspect, tense and mood and they cannot be existentially bound by Tense in order to state that the event has taken place in a particular time and world.

These time and world indexes are provided by a different head, Event, which builds a Davidsonian event corresponding to the description provided by Init, Proc and Res, and allows the predicate to be bound by aspect, mood and tense in further steps in the derivation. Once Event is merged, the predicate description becomes an eventuality that is standardly bound at the TP level and therefore allows quantification.

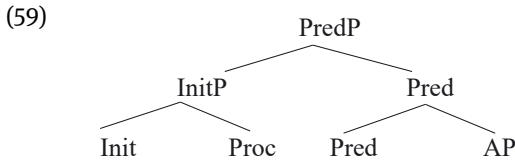


In the analysis proposed here,¹¹ what characterises DEAs is that within the adjectival structure they contain a Process Phrase (ProcP) that describes a dynamic event. This dynamic event-denoting head is what provides the partial eventive properties to DEAs in terms of it allowing event modification, being a possible input for the progressive periphrasis and licensing an argumental interpretation of the subject. As ProcP is an event description without time and world parameters, the predicate does not directly combine with aspect, tense and mood, and does not license the iterative reading of *re*-, which presupposes that

¹¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting us the idea of positing *procP* as the event description subject of DEA eventive-nominals, which we develop in this section.

the event can be quantified over. Given the agent entailments associated to the DP argument with DEAs, we propose that this Proc head is embedded below an Initiation Phrase, also a partial event description that describes a causative subevent.

Second, the Init-Proc constituent is not introduced as part of the series of heads that dominate the DEA, or as part of the information codified within the adjective, but as a specifier that specifically corresponds to the subject of predication within Bowers (1993) PredP structure, as shown in (59):



In this configuration, the head that introduces a partial event description does not belong to the sequence of heads that define the adjective, or its dominating projections. This prevents the adjective, configurationally, from combining with verbal inflection, on the standard assumption that suffixes and bases combine together through head-movement. In the Section 4.3 we provide a proposal about how this works.

4.3 How the structure works

To begin the analysis, note first that what makes DEAs special is not that they are related to events, but rather that they can be predicated of events, as Stowell (1991) noted. Denoting an evaluative property is not enough. Adjectives such as *capaz* ‘capable’ or *apto* ‘apt’ are evaluative and dispositional but cannot be predicated of an event. In this regard, compare them with *cruel* or *imprudent*:

- (60) a. *Juan fue cruel/ imprudente al hacer esa pregunta.*
 Juan was cruel/ imprudent to make that question.
- b. *Hacer esa pregunta fue cruel/ imprudente.*
 To make that question was cruel/ imprudent.
- c. *Fue cruel/ imprudente por parte de Juan hacer esa pregunta.*
 It was cruel/ imprudent by part of Juan to make that question.
- (61) a. **Juan fue capaz/ apto al hacer esa pregunta.*
 Juan was able/ suitable to make that question.

- b. **Hacer esa pregunta fue capaz/ apto.*
 To make that question was able/ suitable.
- c. **Fue capaz/ apto por parte de Juan hacer esa pregunta.*
 It was able/ suitable by part of Juan to make that question.

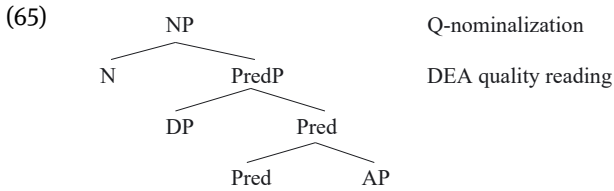
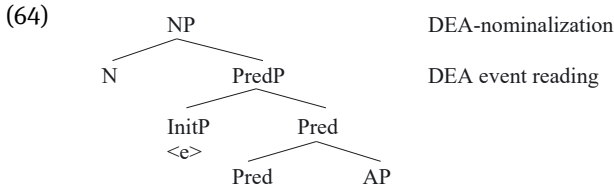
In pure syntactic terms, DEAs can take infinitives corresponding to events as subjects, while *able* or *suitable* cannot. In Stowell's (1991) analysis, the unavailability of the options in (61) suggests that the adjective cannot be predicated of an event at the same time than of an individual, which also implies that there is no covert event that can behave as a subject in the structure of this second group of adjectives. We hypothesize that it is precisely such lack of an event in the structure that makes the interpretation of their nominalizations unable to refer to instantiations of events of any sort:

- (62) *las capacidades de Juan* (≠ *las acciones capaces de Juan*).
 the capacities of Juan (≠ the actions able of Juan).

A second argument in favour of introducing the Process head not as a member of the sequence of heads dominating the AP, or the AP itself, is that DEAs do not have compulsory event readings (Arche 2006; Landau 2002; Stowell 1991). This is illustrated with a pseudo-copula in (63) below, which seems an instance of a typical individual-property reading.

- (63) *Su primo parece amable.*
 Her cousin seems nice.

Remember that, in fact, some DEA-nominalizations are ambiguous between the two readings (cf. the cases of [12] above). This ambiguity is highly unlikely if the event variable is contained in the AP or its dominating heads, but follows naturally if the presence or absence of the event variable simply reflects two possibilities in the types of subjects that these adjectives take. Following Arche and Marín (2011), we analyze this dichotomy as structurally due: the event reading of DEAs and the corresponding E-nominalizations come from a structure containing an event description in the subject position; Q-nominalizations, and the quality reading of the base, come from a structure where the event description is absent and the subject describes another type of entity. This is consistent with the idea advanced in Stowell (1991) and Arche (2006) that DEAs can be associated to two different structures – in contrast to other classes of adjectives that cannot be predicated from event descriptions. The structures below illustrate the two options:



Evidence in favour of the covert event description not being stative is given in Arche (2006), where it is shown that the eventualities predicated of the adjective cannot be states (see [66]).

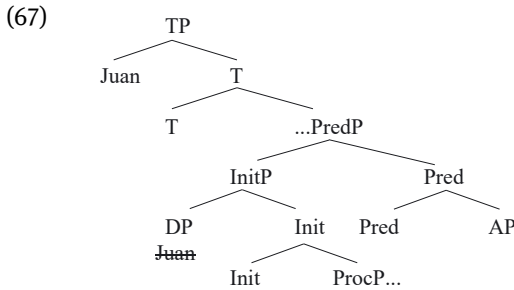
- (66) a. [States] **It was very imprudent of John to know mathematics/to own a house/to be an African/to want that coat.*
 b. [Non-states] *It was very imprudent of John to read my paper/to cook the dinner/to swim in the Ocean.*

As mentioned above, a system such as Ramchand's (2008) capitalizes on three heads that describe the eventuality providing it with content and introducing the argument structure: a causation subevent (Init), a process subevent (Proc) and a result subevent (Res). The first and the last one of these heads denote states, and Proc specifically describes a dynamic event. Given the empirical description above for the properties of DEA constructions, the event description must necessarily contain Proc in order to have a denotation of a dynamic event.

In the general case, the Proc head is empty at spell out, meaning – specifically within Ramchand (2008) – that it is identified by a null morph. Lacking any contentful exponent that incorporates specific conceptual semantics to the dynamic event, the event description is reduced to the basic LF denotation of the Proc head, that is, a dynamic event. Lacking an additional exponent that adds conceptual semantics to the event description, the adjective that constitutes the predicate is naturally interpreted as the set of properties that give some content to that event: *John was cruel (at the party)* is naturally interpreted as 'John did something – we don't know what – that was cruel (at the party)'.

Remember also that the DP constituent in copulative sentences involving DEAs is interpreted as the agent that performs the event. This is the only real

argument that is required in this configuration. This interpretation is obtained if the ProcP partial event description is embedded under InitP, the head that describes an initiation component. This head is also spelled out with an empty morph, again guaranteeing that no additional conceptual semantics to the event description will be added: the denotation is simply that the abstract process is triggered by an entity. In the diagram below, we show how the DP argument is generated in this structure within the Init-Proc complex. From there, once the adjectival structure is embedded under a clausal structure, the DP argument moves to the subject position.



As noted above, the zero manifestation of the Init-Proc complex is not compulsory. There is a second option, namely to identify the verbal heads with a lexical predicate which gets spelled out within a subordinate clause, as in (68). Thus, we follow Stowell (1991) in the analysis that treats these subordinate clauses as subjects of predication within the verbal structure.

(68) *John was cruel to humiliate Bill at the party.*

See now how our analysis blocks that the DEA will be inflected as a verb or that the clause would end up as a verbal predicate. The two factors that block this are (i) the lack of a real Davidsonian event with time and world parameters, preventing T, Aspect or Mood to bind the predicate, and (ii) the configuration, that makes it impossible that even if an EventP was externally introduced above PredP, the event descriptive heads would become a single grammatical object with it.

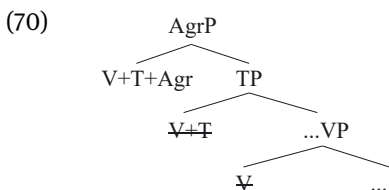
With respect to the first factor, remember that the Init-Proc complex does not denote a Davidsonian event unless combined with EventP. Without EventP, Aspect, Tense or Mood will not find any appropriate variable to bind, because there is no object in their domain with a time or world parameter. This trivially explains that DEAs inflect as adjectives, not verbs.

However, we also want to block a verbal inflection in the eventuality that EventP was introduced externally into the structure, as in (69). Given that PredP

defines a predicate, we cannot exclude in a principled way that EventP would combine with it.

(69) [EventP [PredP [InitP] Pred [AP]]]

However, even if the structure in (69) was built, the DEA would still not be inflected as a verb, because of the configuration proposed. Under standard assumptions, affixes for tense, aspect and mood is heads within the extended functional projection of the clause. In the case of a clause with a verbal predicate the (highest) verb in the structure undergoes head movement to combine with these suffixes (e.g., Pollock 1989).



Head movement is configurationally restricted (Travis 1984) to only head-complement relations: that is, for X to attach to Y under head movement, X must be the head of an XP that is in the complement position of YP, as in the example above. Head movement is illegitimate between (the complement of) a head and a specifier (cf. also Hale and Keyser 1993).

In our structure, the Init-Proc complex is not part of the functional spine. Init-Proc cannot combine with EventP and then with suffixes for tense, aspect or mood because the event descriptive heads are within a specifier, and as such they cannot undergo head movement to those positions. The head of AP cannot do it because in our analysis AP does not contain the event variable, so such suffixes cannot be interpreted as predicates of A. If no support verb (as typically the copula) is introduced in the structure and affixes for tense, aspect or mood are projected, we would have an instance of the old Stranded Affix Filter (Lasnik 1981): affixes that must be combined with a supporting head do not find any available head within the structure. Hence, in our analysis DEAs would never inflect as verbs.

Similarly, consider the case of the prefix *re-*. We characterised this prefix as quantifying over intervals, either degrees or temporal intervals within a verb. There is a preliminary question about whether the iterative reading could be obtained without EventP, but again let us assume that this head could have been merged above PredP and show how the structural position of Init and Proc block the

iterative reading. The only way in which *re*-would be able to give an iterative reading with the adjective would be that it attaches to the minimal constituent that contains the event description, PredP.

(71) [re- [PredP [Init-Proc] Pred [AP]]]

The problem is that here – because Init-Proc are not projecting within the sequence of heads in the structure, but in the specifier – *re*-attaches to PredP, not InitP or ProcP. Bowers (1993) associates Pred to the lambda function in its semantic interpretation: that is, that constituent does not have an interval that satisfies the requirements of *re*-. Alternatively, we could try to attach it directly to Init or Proc.

(72) [PredP [re-[InitP]] Pred [AP]]

Here, indeed, the prefix could quantify over the time parameter of the event, but because the manifestation of this object is null, we would again have an infraction of the Stranded Affix Filter, making this configuration possibly legitimate in syntax and semantics, but not at the morphophonological component. Consequently, the only option would be to attach the prefix to AP, but then a compulsory degree reading would obtain.

In our analysis the existence of deadjectival eventive nominalizations derives from the independent existence of DEAs. Following Stowell (1991), we have proposed that the event reading of DEAs comes from their capacity to be predicates of events, instantiated here as Init-Proc event descriptions. If Roy (2010) is right in the claim that deadjectival nominalizations contain PredP, these eventive nominalizations are just configurations where a nominalizer embeds a PredP whose subject is a dynamic event lacking time and world parameters. As such, the nominalization inherits the event properties of the PredP, which are restricted because the structure lacks the EventP layer that makes it a Davidsonian event. Finally, because the event description is introduced as a specifier and not as a head, the analysis does not incorrectly predict that the adjective would be able to inflect as a verb.

Our proposal shares with other approaches, such as Dowty (1979), Stowell (1991), Bennis (2000), Arche (2006), Arche and Marín (2011), and Landau (2009), the idea that DEAs are – in a sense – ambiguous: they can be predicated from individuals or from events. The distinction follows simply from the type of subject that is introduced in the PredP. Indeed, DEAs express behaviours in conceptual terms (Bosque 1989; Stowell 1991), and intuitively behaviours are mainly properties of individuals that at the same time characterise the typical types of actions in which they participate. Note also that our analysis of Q-nominalizations is not that they lack argument structure or that they involve a null external argument

(as proposed by Roy 2010), but that they have a DP referring to an individual as the subject of predication, as opposed to having an event.¹²

This is the core of our analysis. In the next section we briefly address the gradience in judgements about aspectual modifiers that was presented in Section 3 above.

5 On the aspectual properties of nominalizations

In the previous sections we have established that DEA-nominalizations with eventive properties have an event description in a specifier position, but lack a full-fledged eventive structure, which results in making other typical verbal properties unavailable. In particular, in Section 4 we have explicitly defended that the event description in question occupies the specifier of a PredP position. A question that remains to be addressed is the relation between such lack of core structural eventivity and the possible combination with some temporal modifiers, which, as we showed, is subject to some gradience. We will start by referring to durative adverbials. The ones pointed out earlier on are repeated below for convenience. Eventive nouns, both deverbal (73) and simple nouns (74), allow for modifiers of duration very naturally.

(73) *una operación de dos horas*
an operation of two hours

(74) *una fiesta de dos horas*
a party of two hours

However, DEA nominalizations show a gradience of acceptability with the same modifiers, ranging from marginal acceptability (75a), passing by greater unacceptability as in (75b) or (75c).

- (75) a. *una infidelidad de una noche*
an infidelity of one night
b. *??una necedad de dos segundos*
an stupidity of two seconds
c. *??/*una grosería/crueldad de tres segundos*
a rudeness/cruelty of three seconds

This is interesting because, even though the events that the subject carried out (whatever they were) must have had duration, the nominalizations do not seem to

¹² The analysis of State-Nominalizations is left aside here for future work.

support the temporal modifier in such a general way as deverbal or even some undervived event nouns. Even if we can agree that a stupidity (75b), a rudeness or a cruelty (75c) are stupid, rude or cruel acts and such acts must have developed and comprised a certain interval of time, the combination of the nominalization with a temporal modifier does not yield an acceptable result. The lack of compatibility of temporal modifiers with DEA nominalizations that do not give rise to eventive readings but only to quality readings (e.g., *amabilidad* ‘kindness’) is expected and borne out (**una amabilidad de tres minutos* ‘a kindness of three minutes’).

We take the marginality in acceptability of aspectual modifiers to suggest that the DEA nominalizations do not syntactically license aspectual modifiers. We furthermore propose that such a lack of viable aspectual modification signals lack of aspect altogether. Our reasoning goes as follows. Along the lines of Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2000), we conceive Aspect to be a head consisting of a dyadic predicate that orders the two intervals that it takes as predicates, which are represented in the syntax as time phrases (ZPs) à la Stowell (1993, 2007). As Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2004) discuss, it is such intervals that are modified by temporal adverbials. We follow the reasoning one step further and conclude that, given that there is no semantic or conceptual incompatibility with having duration (recall that the events referred to through the nominal must have some duration), the lack of viable modification may signal the lack of time intervals in the syntactic structure. Even more, since such intervals are taken to be the arguments of a predicate ordering head, their unavailability may signal the absence of the head itself altogether, which is what follows if EventP is missing – remember that in Ramchand (2018) this is the head that provides the temporal parameter that Aspect would modify.

That is, what we are saying is that the reduced or null viability of aspectual durative modifiers reflects the absence of an Aspect head;¹³ there is no Aspect head that can combine with the event description sitting in the specifier in question, because the heads describing the event lack a time parameter able to be modified by tense, aspect or mood. In consequence, the availability of modifiers that lexically denote duration and time periods must be justified only by remaining material, specifically the conceptual information related to the adjectival root. Remember, in this sense, that the event structure is reduced to only partial event

13 In this sense we differ from Zato (2020) in his analysis of the ungrammaticality of durative modifiers as being a sign of imperfectivity. In formal frameworks where the aspect value is determined by ordering predicates (e.g., Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria 2000; Klein 1994), imperfectivity is not a value by default but a specific ordering predicate (*within*); perfectivity is not considered a more complex value but just one that is expressed by an ordering different predicate (*total overlap*). Also, we have demonstrated that nominalizations such as *wisdom* or *beauty* cannot be considered stative ones, in contrast to what Zato does.

descriptive heads which, moreover, lack an exponent that spells them out and adds conceptual semantics to them. The only available information to give content to the event must then be whatever can be deduced from the information provided by the adjectival root – *cruel*, *imprudent*, etc. We speculate here that the acceptability of temporal modifiers may be somehow related to the type of property described by the adjectival root. The easier it is to reconstruct an event the easier to accept durative modifiers. In this sense, consider the pair of examples below. In a similar way to what we described for the pair *imprudent/cruel cook* in (8) above, it may be that (76a) sounds better because it is easier to establish a pragmatic relation between some imprudence and losing one's job vs. some cruelty and losing one's job.

- (76) a. *?Por una imprudencia de dos segundos, perdió el trabajo.*
 For an imprudence of two seconds, he lost his job.
 b. *??/*Por una crueldad de dos segundos, perdió el trabajo.*
 For a cruelty of two seconds, he lost his job.

In sum, we propose that DEA nominalizations lack the syntactic structure necessary to license aspectual modification. The availability of some of it (see the compatibility with the aspectual modifier *frequent* below in [77]) can be argued to depend on the informativeness of describing a particular duration for the event that can be described with the adjective. In terms of world-knowledge and conceptual semantics, we can speculate that the duration of an infidelity, or an imprudent act, can be informatively more relevant; not so much, however, the length of a rude act and even less that of any property pragmatically deemed as positive. Under the same light, consider the combination with *frecuente* 'frequent'. As we showed, this modifier combines well with complex and simple event nominals, (77a) and (77b); with respect to DEA nominalizations, some accept it better (78a) than others (78b), where the acceptability of the aspectual modifier is quite marginal.

- (77) a. *sus frecuentes conversaciones*
 their frequent conversations
 b. *sus frecuentes fiestas*
 their frequent parties
- (78) a. *sus frecuentes imprudencias*
 his frequent imprudences
 b. *??sus frecuentes necedades*
 his frequent stupidities

In the case of a complex event noun, the availability of this modifier would be granted by the presence of more complete verbal structure; in the case of a simple event noun, it would be licensed by the systematic conceptual semantics of the noun, which denotes an event itself. In the case of event-denoting DEAs, however, both the syntactic verbal structure (EventP) and the verbal conceptual semantics that an exponent for Init-Proc would have provided are missing. The only chance to license this modifier is via the conceptual semantics that the adjective can grant and an informative interpretation of frequency. This is not always the case. In the case of (78a), the combination is felicitous, because the conceptual semantics related to 'imprudent' matches well the conceptual prototype that the acts that exhibit imprudence could be occasional or more systematic. However, the conceptual semantics related to 'stupid' (a less controllable disposition) is less compatible with an interpretation where one determines the stupidity based on single occurrences of acts: *stupidity* is rather interpreted as a general property that can be potentially manifested in all types of acts performed by the stupid person, while *imprudence* is only manifested in specific types of acts where the person puts himself in danger (imprudent denoting a property that falls under a subject control).

Given this type of difference – which is informed by world knowledge, and not by the internal grammatical structure of the nominalization – we expect the availability of this modifier to be affected not just by the type of root used to spell out the adjective, but also by contextual factors that might make the duration or frequency more informative than what the root semantics grants alone.

In sum, what we have wanted to show in this section is that DEA nominalizations have a very gradient combination with aspectual modifiers because they lack a syntactic Aspect projection. The vestigial aspectual modification available for DEA nouns is limited to that which is licensed by the conceptual semantics related to the adjectival exponent, and can be enriched by context, increasing the availability of such modifiers.

6 Summary and conclusions

This paper aligns itself with the line of research that proposes that the properties of nominalizations can be predicted from the properties of the structure embedded below NP (Alexiadou 2001; Arche and Marín 2015; Borer 2013; Fábregas and Marín 2012). We have provided a finer grained taxonomy of deadjectival nominalizations and have argued that a dichotomy between qualities and states does not exhaust the options that natural languages use. We have shown the existence of nominalizations that perform closer to simple event nouns in a number of tests, referring

to event denotation. We have defended the idea that it is possible to predict which nominalizations can give rise to an eventive-like reading based on the properties of the stem: those deriving from DEAs, which contain adjectival stems where an event is involved. It has become apparent throughout the discussion that conceptual reference to an evaluative property is not enough to produce eventive-like nominalizations. Only those adjectives able to be predicated of an event description at the same time than of a sentient individual can produce eventive-like nominalizations. We have also argued that the ambiguity exhibited by some nominals is explained by an ambiguity in the predicational structure underlying the nominalization. Furthermore, we have also shown that treating the event description as a subject introduced in a specifier position, and not as a projecting head within the structure of the adjective, makes the right predictions about the behaviour of DEAs with respect to inflection and prefixation. In this sense we have shown that aspectual modification is defective with these types of nominalizations.

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